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REMARKS

This Response is fully responsive to the Office Action of March 30, 2005. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this Application and entry of this Amendment.

Status of Claims

Applicants submit that the Disposition of Claims in the Office Action Summary improperly listed claim 25 as being withdrawn from consideration because it was related to a non-elected species. Applicants elected the species where the dispersing agent is sodium octyl sulfate which is currently recited in claim 25. Only claim 26, reciting a dispersing agent that is polyvinyl alcohol or polyvinyl pyrrolidone, is related to a non-elected species. Applicant submits that the proper status of the claims should be that, with new claim 72, claims 1-72 are pending in the application; that claims 26 and 37-71 are withdrawn as drawn to a non-elected invention and that claims 1-25 and 27-36 and new claim 72 are presently under consideration.

Amendments to the Claims

Applicants submit that the amendments to the claims and new claim 72 are supported by the specification and claims as originally filed and do not add new matter to the application. In particular, the specification sets out that the aqueous developer and regenerator may be used in combination with each other at pages 5 and 6. Further, the specification provides suitable K_b values for strong and weak bases at page 5, lines 14-25. Other changes to the claims are made in order to clarify the relationship of the components that are used in the both the developer and regenerator and are not meant to change the scope of the claims as originally filed.

Claims Rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-24 and 27-36 under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,740,468 to Aoshima ("Aoshima").

The Examiner indicated that Aoshima reports a composition having a pH solution from 9.0 to 13.5 and comprising a sufficient amount of one or more alkaline agents including

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the elected species of sodium hydroxide and diethanolamine, a dispersing agent and an organic solvent including the elected phenoxyethanol.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as amended, and related dependent claims 2-25 and 27-37 are not anticipated by Aoshima because Aoshima does not report an aqueous developer and regenerator combination where the regenerator contains a sufficient amount of a base having a K_b greater than the base contained in the developer such that the regenerator has a pH greater than the pH of the developer.

Specifically, Aoshima reports developers and developer replenishers for use in developing planographic printing plates. Both the developers and developer replenishers include alkali aqueous solutions, organic solvents and dispersing agents. Aoshima lists a number of alkali aqueous solutions that may include both strong and weak bases as part of a broad description of suitable alkali aqueous solutions. Aoshima, however, does not provide any teaching or suggestion of how the various components that are contained in the developer or in the replenisher should be related. Specifically, there is no teaching or suggestion that a regenerator contain a base that has a K_b that is greater than the K_b of the base contained in the developer. Unlike the present invention, the developer and developer replenisher reported in the Aoshima examples both include the same strong base, potassium hydroxide.

In sum, Aoshima does not teach or suggest a developer and regenerator combination where a regenerator has pH greater than the developer and where a regenerator containing a strong base is used to maintain the properties of a developer containing a weak base.

Applicants submit that Aoshima does not report each and every element recited in claim 1 and that Aoshima does not anticipate, teach or suggest the now claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

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Conclusion

All pending claims are now in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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